Copy

Boston Sept. 2. 1839

Mr. Emerson

Dear Sir

I notice in the Appendix to a book of scandal, entitled "Right & Wrong in Massachusetts", recently published, a letter of mine, which, so far as I can recollect, was written to you, about the time it was decided that Mr. Holmes was to leave you. The letter was written, not with any injunctions of secrecy to be sure, but with the unguarded familiarity & frankness of personal friendship, ~~& written~~ & with no expectation of its publication. To be sure it contains nothing in the way of fact or statement which I am not fully prepared to sustain before the public, & which is not strictly true. Of course were any good or important end to be gained by it, I should not object a moment to its publication, had its publication been properly sought. — I say "properly sought" — for it is a rule with me not to publish letters addressed to me personally, even where there is no injunction of confidence, without at least consulting the writer in respect to it. Nor do I deem it, either honorable or christian in any one to ~~publish~~ do otherwise in regard to letters from me. Judge of my surprise then, when without the least intimation of the thing from you, I find my letter to you given to the public — & the more so, when the letter contains some things in respect to the ~~mere~~ supply for your desk, which to one ignorant of the individual named, or the character of your church & people, are capable of being misunderstood & perverted, ~~as~~ as they actually have been by my enemies. If ~~the~~ the letter was published by your consent & direction, I know not by what-

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authority the names of persons & places are omitted. As it is, I can hardly believe that you were accessory to the publication, or if you were that some means were taken to induce your consent, which were far from honorable in those who used them.

I write this then to inquire first how the letter came to be published, without seeking my consent, or giving me any intimation of the fact, or of the reasons for it? And, second, to say, that as any individual or individuals who would publish such a letter, in the manner stated, (omitting names & places, & giving no clue to the circumstances of the case just adverted to), might also make other alterations or omissions which might suit their purpose, I will thank you, if you have it in your possession, to return me the original letter, at your earliest convenience.

Yours &c.

A. A. Phelps.

Paid - Box 283.
A. A. P.

PAID

Dea. Emerson,
(Teacher)
New Bedford,
Mass.

MS.A.9.3.18.34